

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1 (Currently amended). A method of configuring a processing device, comprising the steps of:

- accessing a certificate bound to the processing device;
- authenticating the certificate;
- reading configuration parameters from the certificate, if properly authenticated;
- configuring the processing device hardware responsive to the configuration parameters to set one or more of: ~~the~~ a speed of a hardware component of the processing device, access to one or more ~~normally hidden~~ otherwise inaccessible memory locations or ~~the~~ enablement or disablement of a hardware component.

2 (Original). The method of claim 1 wherein the steps of accessing the certificate, authenticating the certificate, and reading configuration parameters from the certificate are performed whenever the processing device is initially powered.

3 (Original). The method of claim 2 wherein the steps of accessing the certificate, authenticating the certificate, and reading configuration parameters from the certificate are repeated upon a system reset or boot ~~reset/boot~~.

4 (canceled).

5 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~and~~ further comprising the step of configuring software in the processing device responsive to the configuration parameters.

6 (Currently amended). A processing device comprising:

- processing circuitry;
- a memory coupled to the processing circuitry;
- wherein the processing circuitry:

- accesses a certificate bound to the processing device and stored in the

memory;

authenticates the certificate;

reads configuration parameters from the certificate, if properly authenticated;

configures the processing device hardware responsive to the configuration parameters to set one or more of: ~~the~~ a speed of a hardware component of the processing device, access to one or more ~~normally hidden~~ otherwise inaccessible memory locations or ~~the~~ enablement or disablement of a hardware component.

7 (Original). The processing device of claim 6 wherein the processing circuitry accesses the certificate, authenticates the certificate, and reads configuration parameters from the certificate whenever the processing device is initially powered.

8 (Currently amended). The processing device of claim 7 wherein the processing circuitry accesses the certificate, authenticates the certificate, and reads configuration parameters from the certificate upon a system reset or reboot ~~reset/boot~~.

9 (canceled).

10 (Original). The processing device of claim 6 wherein the processing circuitry configures software in the processing device responsive to the configuration parameters.

11 (Original). The processing device of claim 6 wherein the certificate can be created and modified only by the manufacturer of the processing device.

12 (Currently amended). A method of configuring a processing device, comprising the steps of:

accessing a certificate bound to the processing device;

authenticating the certificate;

reading configuration parameters from a data file associated with the certificate, if the certificate is properly authenticated;

configuring the processing device hardware responsive to the configuration

parameters to set one or more of: ~~the~~ a speed of a hardware component of the processing device, access to one or more ~~normally hidden~~ otherwise inaccessible memory locations or ~~the~~ enablement or disablement of a hardware component.

13 (Original). The method of claim 12 wherein the steps of accessing the certificate, authenticating the certificate, and reading configuration parameters are performed whenever the processing device is initially powered.

14 (Original). The method of claim 13 wherein the steps of accessing the certificate, authenticating the certificate, and reading configuration parameters are repeated upon a system reset/boot.

15 (canceled).

16 (Previously presented). The method of claim 12 and further comprising the step of configuring software in the processing device responsive to the configuration parameters.

17 (Currently amended). A processing device comprising:  
processing circuitry;  
a memory coupled to the processing circuitry;  
wherein the processing circuitry:  
accesses a certificate bound to the processing device and stored in the memory;  
authenticates the certificate;  
reads configuration parameters from a data file associated with the certificate, if the certificate is properly authenticated;  
configures the processing device hardware responsive to the configuration parameters to set one or more of: ~~the~~ a speed of a hardware component of the processing device, access to one or more ~~normally hidden~~ otherwise inaccessible memory locations or the enablement or disablement of a hardware component.

18 (Original). The processing device of claim 17 wherein the processing circuitry accesses the certificate, authenticates the certificate, and reads configuration parameters whenever the processing device is initially powered.

19 (Original). The processing device of claim 18 wherein the processing circuitry accesses the certificate, authenticates the certificate, and reads configuration parameters upon a system reset/boot.

20 (canceled).

21 (Original). The processing device of claim 17 wherein the processing circuitry configures software in the processing device responsive to the configuration parameters.

22 (Original). The processing device of claim 17 wherein the certificate can be created and modified only by the manufacturer of the processing device.

23 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of configuring the processing device ~~performance characteristics of the hardware~~ comprises the step of restoring performance characteristics of the device to a predetermined setting.

24 (Previously presented). The method of claim 23 wherein said step of restoring performance characteristics includes periodic comparison of current hardware performance characteristics with the performance characteristics specified by the configuration parameters.

25 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of configuring the processing device ~~performance characteristics~~ includes the step of configuring a processor speed for the device.

26 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of configuring the processing device ~~performance characteristics~~ includes the step of configuring a memory speed for the device.

27 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of configuring the processing device ~~performance characteristics~~ includes the step of configuring a bus speed for the device.

28 (Previously presented). The method of claim 1 wherein the step of configuring the hardware of the processing device includes the step of selectively enabling or disabling operation of one or more hardware components.

29 (Previously presented). The method of claim 28 wherein the step of selectively enabling or disabling hardware components includes the step of selectively enabling or disabling networking hardware.

30 (Previously presented). The method of claim 28 wherein the step of selectively enabling or disabling hardware components includes the step of selectively enabling or disabling audio hardware.

31 (Previously presented). The method of claim 28 wherein the step of selectively enabling or disabling hardware components includes the step of selectively enabling or disabling video hardware.